

OFFICE OF THE
FIRST SELECTMAN

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Lynne A. Vanderslice
First Selectwoman

Lori A. Bufano
Second Selectwoman

Joshua S. Cole
Selectman

Deborah A. McFadden
Selectwoman

Ross H. Tartell
Selectman

TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT 06897

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Tuesday September 8, 2020
Held Electronically

PRESENT: First Selectwoman Lynne Vanderslice, Lori Bufano, Joshua Cole, Deborah McFadden, Ross Tartell

GUESTS: Chief of Police and Emergency Management Director John Lynch, Fire Chief Geoff Herald, Director of Land Use Management/Town Planner Michael Wrinn, Director of DPW & Facilities Chris Burney, Director Parks & Recreation Steve Pierce, Asst. Director of DPW Frank Smeriglio, CFO Anne Kelly-Lenz

A. Call to Order

Ms. Vanderslice called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm

Ms. Vanderslice asked for a motion to expand item D8 to include appointments for Social Services (Bettye Ragognetti), Historic District Commission (Jeff Bendremer), Conservation Commission (Philip Murphy). Motion moved by Mr. Cole, seconded by Ms. McFadden and carried 5-0.

B. Public Comment

None

C. Consent Agenda

Motion moved by Ms. Bufano seconded by Ms. McFadden and carried 5-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as follows and amend the Board of Selectmen Special Meeting Executive Session August 3, 2020 Minutes to correct a typo.

- Minutes
 - Board of Selectmen Meeting – August 3, 2020
 - Board of Selectmen Special Meeting Executive Session – August 3, 2020
- Refunds
 - As per Tax Collectors Memo Dated September 3, 2020

Ms. Vanderslice noted to the Board that the first 3 discussion items represent three of the Town's 4 priorities for the remainder of the year. She noted the 4 priorities: providing critical town services, the November election, improved public utility services and resiliency and ongoing COVID-19 responsibilities.

D. Discussion and/or Action

1. Absentee Ballot Voting – Town Clerk Lori Kaback

Town Clerk Lori Kaback provided an overview of absentee ballot voting – see attached. Ms. Kaback noted that application requests for ballots can be mailed or dropped in the ballot box located at the Wilton Police Station. Ballots must be returned by 8:00pm day of election. Ms. Kaback addressed questions from the board.

2. Hurricane Isaias Review – John Lynch, Chris Burney, Anne Kelly-Lenz

Ms. Vanderslice thanked town staff for the outstanding job during this weather event. Chief Lynch provided an overview of the storm, the impact and the issues with the response by Eversource and the cable/internet providers. Mr. Burney provided an overview from the perspective of the Department of Public Works. Ms. Kelly-Lenz provided an update on potential cost reimbursements through FEMA. Chief Geoff Herald provided an overview from the Fire Department. Steve Pierce reviewed the Internet Center at Comstock.

Ms. Vanderslice reviewed efforts underway to improve future outcomes related to tropical storms. Efforts include those by the State Legislature, the Public Utility Regulatory Commission and the Town of Wilton. Ms. Vanderslice suggested areas of assistance from the Wilton Energy Commission and the Wilton Tree Commission. Ms. McFadden to liaison with the Energy Commission. Mr. Cole to liaison with the Tree Committee.

The board members thanked the town staff for their hard work during the storm.

3. COVID Update – John Lynch, Chris Burney, Steve Pierce, Michael Wrinn, Anne Kelly-Lenz

John Lynch, Chris Burney, Steve Pierce, Michael Wrinn and Anne Kelly-Lenz provided an update of ongoing work related to COVID-19. Ms. Vanderslice noted the Governor extended all of his unexpired Executive Orders and any for other agencies or municipalities until November 9, 2020. The Governor extended the state of emergency into February.

Speaking to financial concerns, Anne Kelly-Lenz shared that tax collections were similar to the prior year. 19 taxpayers qualified for the COVID-19 tax deferral program. Ms. Vanderslice expressed the shared concern about the impact of COVID on small businesses and non-profits. Ms. Vanderslice suggested the Board request the Economic Development Commission reach out to small businesses and the Social Services Commission to their non-profits to determine if and what ways the Town can be of assistance. She also noted the board had previously discussed asking the Social Services Commission to review the current tax relief program for seniors and individuals with disabilities and determine its effectiveness and make recommendations. Ms. Bufano to liaison with the Economic Development Commission. Mr. Tartell to liaison with the Social Services Commission.

4. WestCOG Studies Update

- Public Safety Study
- Regional Waste Management
- Regional Animal Control

Ms. Vanderslice noted 7 areas of regional studies/work proposed or in process by WestCOG on behalf of member towns, including the three listed above which are areas of interest previously discussed by the BOS. Another is related to housing,

prompted, in part, by discussions around possible legislation. Ms. Vanderslice noted she was contacted by the Wall Street Journal in connection with an article highlighting proposed legislation based on the proposals from DeSegregateCT. The organization's proposals are supported by CCM's executive director and CCM's executive committee. Ms. Vanderslice asked Michael Wrinn to provide an overview of the proposals. Mr. Wrinn noted three areas of focus related to land use changes: expanded housing diversity, increased housing supply and improved (streamline and facilitate) processes for development. He noted the latter would result in reduced costs for the developer and increased costs for the Town of Wilton. He also expressed concern for the potential of a one-size-fits-all approach, which would not be beneficial to Wilton. Proposed by-right density for properties located within a half mile of transportation would have a different impact for the area surrounding the Wilton Center Train Station as opposed to the Cannondale train station area. Mr. Tartell noted the proposals may motivate Wilton to make positive changes, but if too heavy handed could result in opposition.

Mr. Wrinn and Mr. Smeriglio answered questions from board members.

5. 2021 Distracted Driving High Visibility Grant (DDHVE)
Motion moved by Ms. McFadden to approve applying for the 2021 Distracted Driving High Visibility Grant. Motion seconded by Mr. Tartell and carried 5-0.
6. FFY 2020 State Homeland Security Grant MOA
Motion moved by Ms. McFadden to approve the FFY2020 State Homeland Security Grant MOA. Motion seconded by Ms. Bufano and carried 5-0.
7. 2020 Neglected Cemetery Account Program Grant
Motion moved by Ms. Bufano to approve applying for the 2020 Neglected Cemetery Account Program Grant. Motion seconded by Mr. Cole and carried 5-0.
8. Reappointments
 - Reappointment of Town Assessor – Sarah Scacco
Motion moved by Ms. McFadden to reappoint Town Assessor Sarah Scacco, seconded by Ms. Bufano and carried 5-0.
 - Reappointment of Jeff Lapnow – Conservation Commission
Motion moved by Mr. Tartell to reappoint Jeff Lapnow to the Conservation Commission, seconded by Ms. McFadden and carried 5-0
 - Appointment of Bettye Ragognetti – Social Services Commission
Motion moved by Ms. Bufano to appoint Bettye Ragognetti to the Social Services Commission, seconded by Ms. McFadden and carried 5-0.
 - Appointment of Jeff Bendremer – Historic District & Historic Property Commission
Motion moved by Ms. McFadden to appoint Jeffrey Bendremer to the Historic District & Historic Property Commission, seconded by Mr. Tartell and carried 5-0.
 - Appointment of Philip Murphy – Conservation Commission
Motion moved by Ms. Bufano to appoint Philip Murphy to the Conservation Commission, seconded by Mr. Tartell and carried 5-0.
 - Ms. Vanderslice noted the board must vote to remove William Olmstead from the Economic Commission as the Town has not received a formal notice of resignation. This is required to fill the vacancy on that

board. Motion moved by Ms. Bufano to formally remove William Olmstead as a member of the Economic Development Commission, seconded by Ms. McFadden and carried 5-0

E. Selectmen's Report

1. First Selectman

- Board of Assessment Appeals Alternate Required for September MV Hearings.
Ms. Vanderslice noted that hearings are set to be scheduled for the end of September and an alternate possibly will need to be appointed.
- Special meeting of the Board on September 16, 2020 to conduct board/commission candidate interviews.
- September 11 remembrance service will not be in person. Wilton Firefighters are providing a remembrance through social media. Information can be found on www.wiltonfirefighters.org and on the department's Facebook page.

2. Selectmen

Ms. McFadden

Ms. McFadden noted that on September 10, 2020 will be participating in zoom meeting to learn more about the changes and updates in the Sustainable CT process. Will report back at September 22nd meeting. Acknowledged Jack Majesky for all the work he has done for Wilton.

Ms. Bufano

Ms. Bufano noted that she and Mr. Tartell attended the virtual ceremony honoring Jack Majesky for his years of service. Ms. Bufano read the Citation issued by the First Selectwoman on behalf of the Town.

Mr. Tartell

Mr. Tartell noted that he will follow up with the First Selectwoman on logistics and scope of project for the social services commission.

Mr. Cole

None.

F. Public Comment

None

G. Adjournment

There being no further business, motion moved by Ms. McFadden, seconded by Mr. Tartell to adjourn meeting at 9:44 pm. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted
Jacqueline Rochester
Taken from video!

**Board of Selectmen Meeting
September 8th**

Overview of Absentee Ballot Voting Process

Report on the Absentee Ballot process for the Primary

Overview of the Absentee Ballot process for the General Election

- All voters can vote using an absentee ballot.
- Voters must submit an application for a ballot.
 - Beginning this week, ballot applications, with a unique ID, are being mailed by the State to registered voters as of August 26th.
 - Applications for newly registered voters are being mailed out by the Registrar of Voters. These applications do not have a unique ID.
 - Applications are also available online.
- Applications must be returned to the Town Clerk.
 - Deposit in Ballot Box outside Police Headquarters.
 - By mail or by email or fax, followed by mail.
- Ballots are mailed out to voters beginning October 2nd.
- Ballots may be deposited in the ballot box or returned by mail. Ballots must be returned by 8:00p.m. of election day. Please use the Ballot Box outside Police Headquarters on election day.

Application and Ballot Security

How intend to meet additional staffing needs for the General Election

- We are assuming up to 8,000 applications for an absentee ballot.
- Processing of 8,000 applications requires the equivalent of 1 person for 38 weeks. We only have 4-5 weeks.
- We are increasing staffing through overtime, employees in other departments and part-time personnel.
- We are reducing the public hours of the Town Clerk's Office from five days per week to three days per week. Beginning on September 28th through November 4th, the Town Clerk's Office will be open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays only.

BOS members can help by

- Encourage voters to return the absentee ballot application they receive in the mail as soon as possible.
- Remind voters that the application received through the mail has a unique ID and therefore facilitates processing.
- Share your knowledge of and confidence in absentee voting.

Tropical Storm Isaias

**Post Assessment
and
Measures to Improve Outcomes for Future Storms**

Board of Selectmen Meeting
September 8, 2020

Actions to Improve Outcomes

- **Legislature:**
 - **Energy and Technology Committee [Information Hearing](#) on the Storm**
 - 12 hour+ Hearing. Video available on [CT Network](#)
 - Testimony by Eversource Executives and the Public
 - **Energy and Technology Committee Draft Bill LCO 3920- [An Act Concerning Emergency Response by Electric Distribution Companies and Revising the Regulations of Other Public Utilities](#)**
 - Listening Session-September 8th
- **Special Legislative Session this month to consider the draft bill**

Actions to Improve Outcomes

- **PURA:**
 - **Opened Investigation into Eversource's and UI's response to the storm. Docket number: 20-08-03**
 - Public Hearing on October 21st, 22nd, 23rd
 - *Email written testimony to PURA.ExecutiveSecretary@ct.gov . Put docket number in the subject line*
 - **Opened Consideration of Civil Penalty and Enforcement Action**
- **PURA-Ongoing**
 - **Utility Vegetation Management requirements are viewable [online](#)**

Actions to Improve Outcomes

- **Town of Wilton Priorities-Short-term**
 - **Applied for and awarded Intervenor Status for the October Public Hearing**
 - Ability to provide testimony
 - Ability to ask questions
 - Provided with all information
 - **Working with area towns to request an investigation by PURA into how cable companies handed the response to the storm**

Actions to Improve Outcomes

- **Town of Wilton Priorities:**

- **Increased Resiliency**

- Propose ordinance-restrict tree location & height along the road and near wires
 - [Right Tree, Right Place Standards](#)
 - Propose zoning changes to reflect the ordinance
 - Town Tree Removal Plan and increased funding for tree removal

- **Improved and Expanded Wireless/Cellular Service and Coverage**

- Wireless is the next form of competition
 - Investigate and encourage investment by wireless providers

Actions to Improve Outcomes

How Can Appointed Boards and Commissions Independently Support Priorities?

- ***Energy Commission-Support Alternative Energy Sources***
- ***Energy Commission-Investigate Municipal Utility***
 - Suggested by Residents
 - Energy Commission work with Knowledgeable Residents to Evaluate
- ***Tree Committee-Investigate Incentives for Tree Removal by Private Property Owners***

COVID-19 UPDATE

Board of Selectmen Meeting
September 8th

COVID-19 UPDATE

How Can Appointed Boards and Commissions Independently Support Priorities?

- ***Economic Development Commission-Small Businesses***
 - *Proposals on how the Town can assist with their survival*
- ***Social Services-Wilton Non Profits***
 - *Proposals on how the Town can assist with their survival*
 - *Prioritize*
- ***Social Services-Senior & Persons with Disabilities Tax Relief***
 - *Evaluate effectiveness*
 - *Propose alternatives, if appropriate*